

REMARKS

This preliminary amendment is being filed in view of a telephone interview conducted on December 6, 2006 between the Examiner's Supervisor, William C. Vaughn and Applicants' representative, William P. O'Sullivan. The subject of that interview was an Examiner's Amendment that accompanied a Notice of Allowance mailed on September 14, 2006. The Applicants and Mr. O'Sullivan thank the Examiner's Supervisor for his time and consideration during that interview.

On its face, the Examiner's Amendment appeared to have canceled claim 18 and amended claims 6 and 21. During the December 6, 2006 interview, Applicants' representative explained that although authorization had been given to cancel claim 18, no authorization had been given to amend claims 6 and 21. Applicants' representative further explained that the Examiner's Amendments to claims 6 and 21 were confusing because they attempted to add language that was already recited in those claims and attempted to delete other language that was not already recited in those claims. The Examiner's Supervisor agreed that a clarification of the claims in this application was in order. The Examiner's Supervisor further agreed that a preliminary amendment should be filed to reflect an updated set of claims showing claims 6 and 21 as they existed prior to the Examiner's Amendment and showing claim 18 as having been canceled.

In the attached set of claims, claims 1-3, 5-17 and 19-24 are pending. Claims 6 and 21 are shown as they existed prior to the Examiner's Amendment. Claim 18 is canceled.

It is respectfully requested that the attached set of claims be entered, and that prosecution on the merits of this application be continued. If, for any reason the Examiner does not believe such action can be taken, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Applicants' representative

Application No.: 10/061,982

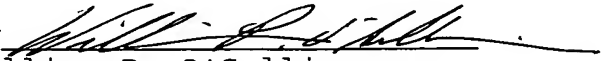
Docket No.: SCEI 3.0-117

at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any objections which he may have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Dated: 12/7/06

Respectfully submitted,

By 

William P. O'Sullivan

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